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"A distant sound of wheels on the road below"—p. 402.

TRIED.

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CHAPTER I.

ON the grey background of a dim twilight sky, one evening in early spring, a horse and its rider stood out in strong relief, looking, in their perfect immobility, exactly like an equestrian statue

moulded in bronze. The spot on which they were placed was a height, rising so abruptly from the public road which wound beneath it, that any one standing upon it could scrutinise all that went on

below, without being likely to attract attention, unless the passers-by purposely looked up at a particular point. The horse was a powerful bay, trained, it would seem, to remarkable docility, so rigidly motionless was the attitude he maintained under the light but firm hand that controlled him; and the rider was a woman, young and striking-looking, though not possessed of anything approaching to absolute beauty. There was a peculiar simplicity, joined to undoubted high breeding, in her appearance. Her plain dark riding-habit, sweeping in long folds almost to the ground, fitted her graceful figure faultlessly; but her low-crowned black hat had not even the inevitable feather to ornament it, and the luxuriant brown hair on which it rested, was arranged without the least attempt to follow the prevailing fashion in all its fantastic display. Her face was not, as we have said, strictly handsome, but very winning in its sweetness of expression, and full of character. The broad, well-developed forehead projected somewhat over the grey eyes which looked out from under their dark eyebrows with a singularly clear, frank gaze, and there was a marked indication of firmness and mental strength in the classic curve of the lips, which relieved with their rose tint the natural paleness of her complexion.

It was a face which would have attracted a second glance at any time, but it would have done so especially at this moment, when it was full of that expression of power which passionate feeling held under rigid control by a strong will gives so remarkably to the human countenance. The hurried, irregular breathing and the quivering of the finely-cut nostrils told that it was a moment of intense excitement for her; but the motionless form irresistibly recalled the image of a rapid, turbulent stream suddenly frozen up in its onward course, and remaining with its vehement waters chained in the iron bonds of ice, while all their impetuous power lay hid, but not quelled, within.

Thus, for a few moments, horse and rider remained in their statuesque attitude; but suddenly there was a distant sound of wheels on the road below, and over the expressive face of the girl there passed a momentary agitation. She bent forward, leaning her clasped hands on the head of her horse, and gazed with wide-open, eager eyes in the direction whence the sound came. In another moment she saw an open phaeton approaching, drawn by a pair of spirited ponies and driven by a groom, while a gentleman reclined somewhat languidly by his side. It was on this man that the gleaming, earnest eyes now fixed themselves with a look of intense and anxious questioning, which scanned every line of his face during the brief moments when he was passing beneath her unnoticed gaze; and truly, if it was the presence of physical beauty which she sought on that countenance, she might have been amply satisfied, for a more perfect or attractive face could not easily have been found. The features were faultlessly

symmetrical, the beautiful hazel eyes large and soft; but the whole countenance was relieved from all appearance of effeminacy by the strikingly intellectual forehead and the dark hair and beard.

It was but for a moment that the girl could fix her eyes upon it, but her intent and earnest gaze seemed able to master all details, and as the open carriage rolled on and vanished out of sight, she drew a long breath and slowly raised her head, while a look of passionate tenderness stole into her eyes, making them grow moist with tears of intense feeling.

For a few minutes she remained apparently absorbed in the thoughts which so deeply moved her, and then, throwing back her head with a bright look of joyousness, she stroked the arched neck of her horse, and speaking to him almost as though he were a rational being, said, "Now, my Sultan, take me home quick—quick!"

Seeming to understand her at once, the animal bounded away, and carried her swiftly along the road for two or three miles, till she reached a large gate, that was instantly thrown open at her call, and then at the same rapid pace she galloped down a long avenue, which led her up to the door of an old-fashioned country house.

Her approach had apparently been perceived; for the hall-door was instantly opened, and a manservant hurried down the steps, to hold her horse and assist her to dismount. She jumped lightly down, however, without availing herself of his help; and as she gathered up the long folds of her riding-habit, she turned to him and said, almost breathlessly, "The phaeton has not yet returned, has it, Stevens?"

"No, ma'am; but I expect it will be here in a very few minutes, if Mr. Leigh's train was true to its time—and the express is seldom late. Oh, Miss May! it will be like old times to see him again," added the man, speaking with the respectful familiarity of an old servant.

"So it will," she answered, softly; and then flying as with winged feet up the steps and through the hall, she opened the door of a large, luxuriously-furnished drawing-room, where an old lady was seated by the fire, quietly engaged in knitting, her delicate hands passing swiftly and noiselessly through the fine white wool which formed the material of her work. She was one who might have sat for a picture of that peace, foreshadowing the great final rest, which comes to gentle, trusting souls, when the fever-days of life are over, and the twilight dimness that has fallen upon all earthly scenes is brightened by the golden gleam of hope upon the far horizon, speaking of the glorious dawn that shall surely come when the dark, inevitable night is over,—so perfectly peaceful was her mild, soft face, framed in its setting of silver white hair, and wearing a gentle expression which seemed to speak of a heart filled with loving-kindness and goodwill to all men.

Her simple lace cap and dress of lustrous black silk seemed exactly suited to her, and she looked the embodiment of that peculiar loveliness to which old age sometimes attains, when it is touched only by pure and kindly influences.

If this tranquil figure fitly represented the calm evening of life, however, its bright, hopeful morning, filled with all the promise of its unknown day, was as aptly typified by the young girl who had darted so impetuously into the room, her face glowing with restless excitement. Flinging down her hat on the nearest seat, she ran to the gentle lady's side, and, kneeling at her feet, laid her head confidingly in her lap, while she said softly, "Oh, aunty, he is come—he is come!"

"Come! Thank God!—and safe and well, no doubt, or you would not look so happy, my May. I thought the sea-voyage would restore his health. But where is he?" and she looked round in some surprise.

"Still on his way," said the girl, with a low, happy laugh. "I do not believe he has come into the avenue yet."

"But how did you see him, then—not at the station, surely?"

"No—no! and he has not seen me, though I have seen him. I shall not tell you anything about this, aunty, dear," she added, looking up playfully; "but still you may be sure it is true that he is come, and in appearance he is quite the same—only a little thinner, a little graver. But what—oh, what if he should indeed be changed!" and while she spoke the last words, her face blanched as suddenly as when a flying mist obscures in a moment the brightness of the sunrise glow.

She lifted up her dark grey eyes with a look of almost piteous appeal, and the gentle lady, glancing down at her tenderly, smoothed back the brown hair from her young, earnest face, and said to her, in a voice soft, yet solemn, "I do not think you need have any fear; but if it should be so, remember, my darling—remember there is a Love which never changes—never, through all the eternal years of God."

Without another word the girl stooped and kissed the kind hand that had been caressing her; then, rising up, she slowly walked away, passed through the hall to the stairs which led to her own room, and once there, she locked the door, sat down on a low seat, with her face hidden in her hands, and then murmured to herself, "My aunt is right—I know it well; but I am young: there is all my life to come before death—before eternity, and that life hangs upon his love. He is my all—my very all on earth; and what if he should be changed?"

CHAPTER II.

AND truly it was a momentous question which May Bathurst had asked herself as she sat there, with her heart beating almost audibly, in her terrible

anxiety; for she was but twenty-two years of age, and six years of her short life had been given up to a passionate adoration of the man whose possible change of feeling with regard to herself would have brought a darkness as of death over every hope or joy she could ever know on earth.

This girl was no common character, and her somewhat rare qualities had been fostered by an education of an equally unusual nature. She possessed a concentrated power of affection which rendered the enthusiastic devotion to one object, which is often so evanescent in youth—a deep and stern reality to her, while her singularly truthful and generous nature, made her very liable to be deceived by those who had less exalted ideas than she had, of the sacredness of the honour that should regulate all human intercourse, and give to every word its honest and legitimate meaning.

May was the only child of John Bathurst, late Squire of Combe Bathurst, the pleasant country home in which we find her, and which was now her own property, along with all the goodly lands thereunto pertaining. Her mother had died when she was an infant, and for the sake of his dead love, never forgotten by the true-hearted squire, as much as for her own, the girl had been her father's idol from the moment when he held her, sleeping in her happy innocence, over her mother's grave, to the hour when he himself died in her arms, four months before the date on which we first see her.

He indulged her in every wish, and allowed her an amount of freedom and independence which would have been very injurious to a girl less pure-hearted and straightforward. Her perfect liberty of action was, however, in part counteracted by the fact that her father could hardly ever bear her out of his sight, and thus, though she went out hunting with him, and rode and walked by his side in wild spirits wherever he pleased, she never formed any undesirable acquaintances, or fell into the romantic follies which young girls are somewhat apt to indulge in when left too much at liberty.

Warm-hearted and impetuous May interested herself strongly in all her father's tenantry, and from childhood upward identified herself with their concerns, in a way that rendered her very dear to them. Thus her life had always been given to good and useful occupations, and she did not miss the fancy-work and other little frivolous accomplishments with which most young ladies fill up their time, but of which she knew nothing.

She managed, however, to get a very good, though rather strange, education. Her father taught her Latin, and everything which he remembered from his own school and college days; and during the few months which he always spent in spring at his house in London he let her have as many masters as she pleased.

May was undeniably clever, and she learned easily,

reading every book of history or science she could lay her hands upon, so that she probably knew more than most young women, even in these days of ladies' colleges and competitive examinations. She could, withal, self-taught, sing many a charming old ballad, with a voice sweet and clear as that of a bird; and though it is true that she rode about the country without a groom, at which the neighbouring ladies held up their hands in horror, yet her manners were perfectly feminine and modest, having even a tinge of awkward shyness where she was not well acquainted with those to whom she spoke. Her childhood had been perfectly happy. All the summer through she was like a woodland bird, roaming about unchecked in the fresh country air, and in winter she nestled by her father's side before the great library-fire, and read of the heroes and martyrs of old, till her eyes kindled and her cheeks glowed with fervent admiration, and her vivid imagination added lustre to the famous deeds which called its power forth.

When May was about fifteen, her happiness was enhanced by the invitation which the squire gave to his sister, Mrs. Leigh, to make Combe Bathurst her home. This lady, older by some years than her brother, had lost her husband and all her children in a series of calamities, and was now left quite alone, her only connection, besides Mr. Bathurst and his daughter, being Sydney Leigh, her husband's orphan nephew; and she made it a condition, willingly accepted by her brother, that if she came to live at Combe Bathurst, it must also be a home for this young man, during his vacations from Sandhurst, where he was preparing for the army.

Mrs. Leigh was a remarkable instance of the power which an indomitable faith in one great truth can have over a character naturally weak and a mind of very small intellectual capacity. Her original individuality would never have enabled her to influence any one, either for good or ill; nor had she at any time sufficient intuitive power to have made active efforts of the kind. Nevertheless she did exercise a remarkable influence on all with whom she came in contact, from the one fact that she possessed an unconquerable and most unreserved belief in the love of God, ever living, ever working with ceaseless beneficence through all the mysteries of life and death. This beautiful faith was the very essence of her existence, the sum of all her hopes, the source of all her happiness. It shed light for her on all the dark places of earth; it answered every vexed question which bewildered human souls could ask, and it touched, with its pure sweet influence, each person who came in contact with her, sending them from her both holier and happier, they scarce knew how.

On her brother's clever, impulsive daughter this master principle of her soul acted with exceptional power, rendering her very presence a blessing to May, though Mrs. Leigh made not the slightest attempt to control her or to interfere with her in

any way, beyond giving her at all times the heartiest sympathy and the warmest love. She never sought to instruct May on this point more than on any other, but her happy belief was unconsciously expressed in every word she spoke, and almost in every look she gave to the troubled scenes of life, shining specially in her quiet eyes when she spoke of her lost treasures, whom she believed to be already gathered into the bosom of that Love.

Much as May loved her aunt, however, and greatly as she was benefited by intercourse with her, it was not Mrs. Leigh's presence at Combe Bathurst which made that first year after her arrival such a period of dream-like happiness to her niece. Sydney Leigh was there also, at first for brief visits only, but during the last six months before he went to join his regiment in India he resided with the Bathursts entirely, and gradually May's deep passionate heart became filled with a love for him, which was in its nature and extent very different indeed from the light passing fancy to which girls of sixteen are wont to give that solemn name.

May Bathurst well knew, even at that early age, that in giving her love to this man she was giving him her life; that on him, and on him alone, must depend evermore her whole hopes of happiness on this side of the grave; for she held it as a principle, which seemed to have sprung intuitively from her chivalrous nature, that it was a desecration of the very name of love, especially in a woman, to give up the treasure of her affection to more than one man in all the course of her life. Her power of self-devotion was very great, her instinct of hero-worship no less strong, and these combined to render her secret dedication of herself to Sydney Leigh a true and indissoluble bond, which would unquestionably hold her through her whole life in its control, as she intended it should.

Sydney was eight years older than May, and he was undoubtedly possessed of many attractions specially calculated to fascinate one so enthusiastic and imaginative as herself, in the almost haunting beauty of his charming face, his winning manner, his real amiability of disposition, and, above all, his intellectual powers and artistic tastes. But she did not give him her love unsought—or, at least, if she did, she hid her secret well—till he himself asked her if she would promise to be his wife when he came back from India, and to wait for him till then, however long the intervening period might prove to be. Very pathetic was the truth and solemnity with which, in answer to this appeal, the young girl vowed away the life that was opening before her, knowing unmistakably, in her own inmost heart, that through weal or woe her vow would be kept, till death should set its seal on her undivided and faithful love.

It never occurred to May Bathurst that the motive which induced Sydney to win so momentous a promise from her, was any other than an affection as

sincere and earnest as her own; but the truth was that the idea of marrying her had been first suggested to him by her father himself, whose anxiety for the future fate of his motherless girl, in the event of his own death, made him very anxious to be assured that she would be safe in the care of a man whom he liked, and whom he believed he could trust.

It seemed to Mr. Bathurst impossible that Sydney should not love the child who was so dear to himself; and, therefore, he had no scruple in opening the subject to him, stating, at the same time, very plainly, the extent of the fortune to which May would be entitled when he died. Sydney, self-absorbed and fastidious, cared nothing at all for May, excepting as he might have liked an engaging sister or cousin, and her want of positive beauty was a serious drawback to her in his eyes. Still, he was essentially luxurious in his habits, pleasure-loving and indolent, and the chance of possessing Combe Bathurst and a large unencumbered income, in lieu of the regimental pay, which was all he had to depend upon in the future, was a prospect not to be despised, and he determined, at all events, to secure the power of making it a reality at some future period, if he so willed it. He engaged himself, therefore, to May with the glad approbation of her father and aunt, and then went out to India, where he had remained with his regiment during the six years which had intervened since then.

Sydney had written at regular intervals to May, and probably she had never once occupied his thoughts, excepting at the moment when he was so engaged, or when his expensive habits produced some embarrassment, which made him wish that her fortune were already his.

But May! how had she during all those years poured out upon him the whole treasure of her intense, almost worshipping love! and ever as her mind matured, and her perceptions grew clearer, invested him with every ideal perfection, till it seemed to her as if life itself were too poor an offering for the idol of her imagination. In her secluded and uneventful existence he was her one constant and absorbing thought; till circumstances at the time of her father's death brought other and nobler influences to bear upon her, of which we shall have to speak hereafter.

Mr. Bathurst had died very suddenly, in consequence of a fall from his horse, a few months before Sydney's return; and it was, in fact, this event which had decided Leigh to go on half-pay, and come to England, though he had written to May, truly enough, that the Indian climate had affected his health.

The period during which she was expecting his return was a time of almost unendurable suspense to May Bathurst; for, although she never doubted that Sydney had spoken the truth when he said he loved her, at the commencement of their engagement, she

had too much good sense not to be well aware that six years might easily have produced changes, which would render his fulfilment of it a matter of honour and not of choice. This she was determined should not be the case; for she would rather have gone down to the grave in the very spring-time of her life, than have risked the destruction of his happiness by the union which would secure her own. As soon, therefore, as she heard of his intended return, she wrote to him a calm unimpassioned letter, to say that she could not allow him to consider himself still bound by an engagement which, possibly, he might not wish to ratify when he saw her again, and that, therefore, she was determined he should come to Combe Bathurst—his only home in England—absolutely free from all ties, even of honour, as regarded her, inasmuch as she should count herself free also, and that for one month at least he must say no word on the subject to her, and only renew his offer then, if his renewed acquaintance with her made him think it might be for his happiness to do so. In order to enable him to feel himself more completely unshackled, she told him she should reserve to herself the right of refusing to renew the engagement if she thought it best for herself or him. But it almost broke her heart to write words so entirely belying her own feelings and wishes, and from the moment when the letter was sent the aching anxiety of her heart gave her no rest. A few days before his return she got a single line from him, written in all the hurry of his embarkation, simply to say that he had received her letter, and naming the day on which he hoped to be at Combe Bathurst.

And now that day has come; and May suddenly starts to her feet, and listens with parted lips and breathless eagerness to the sound of a voice which echoes softly from the hall below, for that voice is the very music of her life. Yes, he is come! he is in the house! they are breathing the same air! Soon she will look once more upon the beautiful face which she has seen night by night in her dreams since the day he left her. She can hardly restrain the impulse to fly down into his presence, and let him see the rapture with which her loving heart is filled; but she does restrain herself, for her delicate sense of honour, her womanly pride, warn her that for the month of probation she must hide her love jealously from his eyes, so that no feeling of obligation to her should influence him in a decision she would have dependent on his own happiness alone.

With a great effort, therefore, May calmed her agitation sufficiently to ring for her maid, and divest herself of her riding-habit, replacing it with the deep mourning-dress she still wore for her father; and then, outwardly tranquil, but with a heart beating so wildly that she could scarcely breathe, she went down-stairs, opened the door, and found herself face to face with Sydney Leigh.

(To be continued.)

THREE CITIES WITH ONE NAME.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

HN our study of Scripture we meet with one prevailing, we might almost say all-pervading idea, which is constantly presenting itself to us under the figure of a city—the city of God. If we go back to the first book of the Bible, we meet with it there. We read of Abraham, the friend of God and the father of the faithful, leaving the land of his nativity, living for many years as a stranger and a sojourner, and all the while looking “for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” If we pass on to the last book of the Bible, we meet with the same idea. Here we find ourselves delighted and well-nigh overborne with the splendours of the vision vouchsafed to John in Patmos; and what is it which here is the great object of our admiring regard? It is still a city—the city of God, the heavenly Zion, the new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and such are the brightness and blessedness of this glorious consummation that, compared therewith, all the light of earth seems as darkness, and its most ecstatic joys an unsatisfying and troubled dream.

All who have read the Scriptures with any care must have observed that the expressions “city of God,” “Zion,” “Jerusalem,” are employed apparently in very different senses; sometimes to denote the actual and material city which was known among men by these names; sometimes the Gospel state and order, the Church of Christ, with all the honours and privileges which belong to believers; and sometimes the heavenly and eternal state itself. We shall see, however, that with all this apparent diversity there is an underlying, substantial unity of meaning.

We are all familiar with the way in which one scriptural representation prepares for and melts away into another. The ancient Jerusalem, for instance, with all that so wonderfully distinguished it, prefigured, and, as a divinely instituted or selected type, was designed to prefigure, the Gospel economy and order; and now all that belongs to the Church of Christ on earth leads us on to a contemplation of those more valuable blessings and distinguished privileges which shall be realised in eternity. Our Sabbath speaks to us of that keeping of Sabbath which remains to the people of God. As we meet in our assemblies here, we cannot but think of that assembly which shall never break up; our songs are but the prelude to those which shall reverberate through the courts of heaven; and the various services of earth are

but preparing us for the untiring yet unresting service in which we hope to be engaged throughout eternity.

In Scripture we have brought before our view three cities with one name; by successive steps we are led on and up from the material type to the heavenly realisation. As in a series of dissolving views, we see first the material and visible Zion, the ancient Jerusalem; then, taking its place, yet keeping alive its memory, we see the spiritual Zion, the spiritual Jerusalem, the Church of Christ, whereunto we have come, and within which we are included; and, at last, we hear a voice saying, “Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife;” and we gaze upon that which is the crown and flower of all that went before—the heavenly Zion, the new Jerusalem.

1. Following this, the Scriptural order, let us glance first at the original and material type—the ancient city itself. It is impossible not to observe how large and prominent a place this city secures for itself in the pages of Scripture. Throughout the entire course of the Old Testament we are meeting with perpetual allusions to Jerusalem; and when we come to the New Testament we find the references to it are not few or infrequent.

The remarkable and advantageous situation of Jerusalem is largely dwelt upon by inspired writers; standing as it did upon the verge of one of the highest table-lands of the country, it must ever have appeared as a mountain city, and is frequently spoken of as the “mountain throne,”* the “mountain sanctuary” of Jehovah. “This is the mountain which the Lord desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.” “His foundation is in the holy mountains.” “They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which shall not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.” “In Judah God is known, in Salem is his tabernacle.” Many are the references to the strength, security, and compactness of this city, which we meet with in the Word of God.

But this city, had it been only distinguished by the possession of material advantages, would have been but one city among many, instead of standing as she does alone—alone now in the day of her humiliation, as once she stood alone in the excellency of her glory. The most marked characteristic of the city was the ever-memorable fact that it was chosen by God as his dwelling-place, and around which, as a central point, all the most remarkable manifestations of the Divine nature were vouchsafed to God’s ancient

* Stanley’s “Palestine.”

people. Here was that wonderful symbolical and ceremonial economy consolidated and localised, and in connection with the Temple service presented in the most magnificent and imposing form. Here David, the man after God's own heart, chanted forth not a few of those lays which form the Psalter and Prayer-book of God's Church. Here Solomon in all his glory prefigured One wiser and greater than himself. Here the prophets spake of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. But all this is as nothing when compared with the events of a later day; here men looked upon that great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh; here the incarnate Saviour lived and laboured, suffered and died; here were witnessed the wonders of the pentecostal day; and hence radiated those mighty and gracious influences which are still renewing the hearts of men and changing the very face of the earth. These Divine manifestations separate Palestine from all the countries of earth, and invest Jerusalem with a glory before which the glory of every earthly city must "pale its ineffectual fire."

2. The material Jerusalem was, however, only a type of the spiritual Zion, the spiritual Jerusalem, which is the Church of Christ as now existing—the New Testament, the Gospel Church.

It is almost unnecessary to remark that as Christian believers we are described in the New Testament as being put in possession of the spiritual counterparts of all the material and national blessings which were enjoyed by God's ancient people. We are the heirs of all the past; we have lost nothing by the lapse of time. Were they God's chosen people? so are we. Were they the redeemed people of the Lord? their redemption was but the type of ours. Were they Abraham's seed? we, if we believe, are blessed with believing Abraham. Were they of the circumcision? we are of the true "circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh." It is not needful, however, to multiply instances, since the whole New Testament, and especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, can be brought forward as bearing testimony to the fact. Nothing can be more remarkable than the way in which Old Testament phraseology is being continually reproduced in the New Testament, and made the means of expressing a nobler and broader meaning, a deeper and richer spiritual signification.

When we look back to the ancient city of Jerusalem, we find it was remarkable on account of its material strength and consequent security. It was a mountain fortress in which the people of the Lord dwelt securely, save as they were delivered into the hands and power of their enemies by their own sins. Allusions to this

fact abound in the Old Testament, all of which are suggestive of the invincible strength and absolute security which distinguish the spiritual Zion. This city is built upon an irremovable foundation, laid by God himself. It rests on the Rock of Ages. When we remember on what the Church is founded, and what is pledged in its support and defence, we can with composure and confidence look down from the battlements of Zion upon the surging host of those who set themselves against the Lord and his anointed, and say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Dwelling in this city, we may

"The darkening universe defy
To quench our immortality,
Or shake our trust in God."

The ancient city of Jerusalem was, however, chiefly distinguished as the chosen residence and place of the gracious manifestation of Jehovah as the God and Redeemer of Israel. We do not suffer from any disadvantage here. It is true we have not the Temple, "a mountain of white marble, steeped in light like molten gold;" nor need we the Temple, "for the hour is come when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," and we hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Wherever two or three meet together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We have not the brazen or the golden altar—but "we have an altar" which sanctifieth both the giver and the gift. We have not a constant repetition of sacrifices, but our hopes rest upon the one sacrifice offered once for all. We see no ascending and floating clouds of incense-smoke, but we know that both our prayers and our praises are finding acceptance before God perfumed with the much incense of our Saviour's intercession. We have not nor do we need the intervention of any human priesthood, for we have a great high priest, who is "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," and who is constituted such, not according "to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an endless life." We have not the Shekinah, the cloud of glory which gleamed forth from between the cherubim; but though we have not the presence of God indicated by any visible sign, we have, wherever we are, what is far better, the abiding, the continual presence of God. What were the most brilliant and blessed of the Old Testament manifestations of God, compared with that which we have in the person and work of God's own Son, "who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person?" and besides this, we know that God

dwells in the hearts of all believers by the indwelling of his Word and Spirit. Such honour have all his saints! They may not have much that the world esteems, but, blessed as they are with the presence and favour of the Most High, no one can estimate the riches or the happiness of those who enjoy the privilege of dwelling in this city of God—the spiritual Zion—the spiritual Jerusalem.

3. We have now to look at the third City known by this name—the heavenly Zion, the new Jerusalem, Jerusalem the golden. We have passed in thought from the material Jerusalem to the spiritual Zion, and now we go on and up again that we may gaze in vision upon that which is presented to us as the final issue and consummation of all that went before. As we think of this city in its unfading beauty and unimaginable brightness, our first impression is that such knowledge is too wonderful for us; we grow bewildered as we listen to the glorious things which are spoken concerning it. But while there is much that seems obscure through excess of light, we have reason to thank and bless God that he has told us so much which is calculated to strengthen our confidence and gladden our hearts.

Heaven is likened to many different things: we have now to contemplate it as presented under the similitude of a city. If we read Rev. xxi. xxii., we have the vision of a city, the heavenly Zion, the new Jerusalem rising up before us, yet as we read the marvellous description with which we are there furnished, we cannot but feel that the heavenly state so surpasses all our powers of thought that no image, no combination of imagery, can serve to set it forth to view.

The presence of God was peculiarly associated with the ancient city of Jerusalem, and though there is no visible indication of it, is more peculiarly and intimately associated with the spiritual Zion; but the heavenly Zion will be still more remarkably distinguished as the special residence of God and the Lamb, as the place in which, in a quite unexampled way, God will reveal his presence. What may be the precise nature of that final manifestation we know not; we know it will be something unspeakably glorious and satisfying. We shall then have, in reality, that which to the philosopher was only a dream, an immediate vision of God and of all things in God. This city has "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

The term city calls up the idea of substantial strength and consequent security; we know that in former and more unsettled times, men were often able to realise within the enclosure of a city a sense of security nowhere else attainable; they

who dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem, feel that their security is absolute and inviolable. The walls of an earthly city may effectually shut out an armed host, but they are powerless to exclude sin and suffering, sorrow and shame, famine and disease and death; but sin, the cause of all suffering, can gain no admission to this city; and we are told of those who dwell there, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

As we think of a city we think of the highest manifestations of human life and civilisation; so in the new Jerusalem shall we witness the consummation of religious life. Here in the wilderness we very often see it stunted, dwarfed, deformed; there we shall see it in all the glory of an unimpeded and luxuriant development.

We associate with life in a city the idea of free social intercourse. In the heavenly Jerusalem we shall in a way and to an extent quite unexampled commune, and hold intercourse with the entire family of the redeemed. It is very wonderful how in the Church of Christ on earth we have men and women of different ages, characters, tendencies, habits of thought, and life gathering round the Saviour as the great centre of unity, and forming one spiritual corporation. In Christian society, as it exists on earth, we see much to admire, but still not all we would like to see. Even in its best and noblest form it falls short (who shall say how far short?) of that standard unto which it shall by-and-by attain. There will be the hundred and forty and four thousand representing the complete number of the redeemed—a number which no man can number. There will be the entire Church of Christ gathering round and glorying in the one Saviour; no coldness, no estrangement, none of those disturbing and disrupting influences which sometimes operate so powerfully and prejudicially here.

Too much cannot be said of the glory and blessedness of that final state in which we hope to rejoice for ever in the presence of the Redeemer and the redeemed. Who can describe the joy of those who shall see Christ as he is, if even now, not seeing him, yet believing, we rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory? No earthly speech, no angelic speech, will be enough to express the rapture of the saved; and so He, who has shown towards us so incomparable a love, that we may express our gratitude, will put into our mouths that new song which only the redeemed can sing. The worship and service of God and of the Lamb will be the occupation and felicity of those who dwell in the new Jerusalem; all will unite with heart and voice to praise "the wonders of redeeming love, the glories of Emmanuel."



(Drawn by H. PATERSON.)

"She stoops and plucks among the reeds
The blue-starred flower that blows" — p. 410.

FORGET-ME-NOT.

WE stand beside the little rill
That whispers through the reeds
The merry water-bird stays still,
Ere down for prey he speeds.

Her eyes are bent upon the ground,
Her hands in front are crossed,
Her gentle breath gives forth no sound,
Her thoughts seem mazed and lost.

Mine eyes do seek her downward face
With earnest, anxious look;
My ears with sound for many days
Thrilled the soft murmuring brook.

She stoops and plucks among the reeds
The blue-starred flower that blows,
With air of one who little heeds
Forget-me-not or rose.

But when she lifts her head again,
Her eyes encounter mine;
The look she gives me turns my pain;
My dull eyes flash and shine;

She drops the flower within my palm,
And softly home returns;
My heart is filled with love's dear balm,
And fairest fire that burns.

W. F. DEVAS.

JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LXIII.

"I WONDER IS HE MARRIED."

AT was one of those soft September days, so pleasant to dream away at the sea-side, when the wide stretch of yellow sand looks like a golden carpet in the sun, and the sea laps tranquilly on the shore, making liquid gurgles of sound among the gleaming shingle. The hour was too early for fashionable promenaders; but many of the visitors were out enjoying their rambles along the shore and on the cliffs—those who made the pursuit of health their first consideration, and would not sacrifice it to the etiquette which prescribed a certain time for taking the air among the well-dressed crowd for whom the band reserved its music. The water was gay with boats, some with tiny white sails ready to imprison the gentle zephyrs, and others looking like toys as they rose and fell with the sluggish motion of the sea, the musical dip of their oars keeping time to the lowplash of the waves.

Among those thus tempted out to enjoy the beauty of the scene and the warm genial weather were two ladies occupying a light basket carriage, that was driven slowly along the sands. It was a delicately-gloved hand that held the reins, and the ponies were managed with an ease and grace which showed that the fair driver was a proficient in her task, and heightened the attraction of the strikingly handsome face, which won many admiring glances from passers-by. The elder lady seemed in delicate health, to judge from the number of wrappings, and the care taken of her by her companion.

"Are you tired mamma?"

"No, my dear, I am enjoying the bright day, and

this drive I think one of the most delightful that we have had since we came."

"I am glad to hear you say so, mamma, it gives me hope that you are beginning to get strong again."

It was not easy to realise that the low-voiced speaker was Caroline Arden, of Lowfield. Some of her early friends would have been inclined to doubt the identity, yet she was not physically changed, her beauty had still the same stately character, and retained all its calm statuesque grace; possibly it had lost a little of its richness of colouring, the face might be a shade paler and thinner, but that did not supply the key to the indefinable alteration that impressed those about her. All were at a loss to account for the strangely subdued manner, the unbending of the proud spirit, and the traits of kindlier thought and feeling which began to be observable in her. The change was not understood, because its cause lay deep below the surface of ordinary experience; it dated from the time of her father's death. She had never been the same from the day she broke the sad news to her brother in the summer-house.

That shock had been to her nature a sort of moral earthquake—crushing, changing, and regenerating. A meeker, humbler spirit had risen from the ashes of the old overbearing pride, and the real woman's heart had come out from that crucible of sorrow, purified from the alloy which had disguised it. The same heart which had given way in a passion of tears over Lionel Elliott's glove, and raised its ineffectual protest against the sacrifice that she had made. It was not until she stood in the darkened chamber, and looked on the marble face of the dead, that she fully realised what her father had been to

her—how firmly respect and reverence for him had been rooted in her nature, even when her haughty spirit had been drifting them apart. It was then that the first anguish of self-reproach had gone home to her heart—reproach for all the pain that she had caused him, and regret that she had not been a truer daughter.

And what of the widowed wife and mother? Mrs. Arden had sickened after her husband's death, drooping and fading like some tender clinging plant suddenly cut from the support which had sustained and fed its life. Through all the days of mourning she remained, not exactly an invalid, but fretting at home and causing much anxiety to her children. It was that time which knit a closer bond of love and sympathy between mother and daughter, and drew them together as they had never been since Caroline's nursery days, before she had outgrown that gentle maternal influence.

It was now two years since Mr. Arden's death. When his mother showed signs of recovering, Edward paid another visit to Naples, and protracted his stay, much to the disappointment of his mother, who fretted over his absence. Edward had grieved in his own way for his father's death, but it told differently on him; his light elastic temperament could sooner rebound after the first sharp agony had dulled down. With regard to himself and Eva Ashton, there was no change in their relative positions, except that an engagement was understood, and they corresponded with the consent and approval of Eva's uncle. Beyond this, matters had advanced no further. She was still living with the Fenwicks, and devoting herself to her grandfather.

Caroline Arden could not easily reconcile herself to her brother's choice; but in the new discipline which was working on her character she had learned to withdraw her opposition, and silently accept the arrangement as something which she had no power to influence. She had once said to her brother, "You are now head of our house, Edward, and much will depend upon you. With regard to your choice of a wife, I only say that I wish it had been different. At one time I would have done my utmost to hinder your marriage with Eva Ashton; but I have no right to try to control your wishes, and since you have pledged yourself, you are bound in honour to keep your word."

At Lowfield things seemed to be going on in the old groove; but latterly there had been a prevailing feeling of disappointment concerning Edward Arden, and some of the old tenants shook their heads and predicted that "so much running off to foreign parts would do no good to the young master, especially now that he hadn't his father to keep him straight."

This was the position of affairs on the day that Caroline and her mother drove along the sands at the pretty little watering-place where they had gone

in the hope of restoring Mrs. Arden's health. Edward was still on the Continent.

"My dear," began the mother, an uneasy shade crossing her quiet face, "when do you purpose answering Edward's letter?"

"This evening, if you wish it, mamma."

"Yes, Carrie, I should, for to tell you the truth, I am getting very uneasy about him. I don't like the tone in which he writes, and this disposition to stay away from us does not seem natural to him. I hope his acquaintance will not lead him wrong. Ask him, Carrie, when he intends coming home."

"Yes; I think he should be spoken to on the subject. Papa used to say that it was the duty of all landed gentlemen to personally look after their property, and not shift the responsibility to others."

The mother sighed as she said, "I once thought Edward would be like his father, but I begin to find that there is a difference between them. Yet he has his father's principles."

"Yes; to talk about, but not to practise," interrupted Caroline, in a tone which had more of sorrow than sarcasm.

"I am afraid, Caroline, that Edward is altering; and I think it would be a blessing for him to marry Eva Ashton, and settle down as soon as possible."

Caroline remained silent, gazing steadfastly over the ponies' heads. The next moment she uttered an exclamation.

"Why, mamma, there is Mr. Elliott! You remember; papa's friend, the sculptor, who was staying with us at Lowfield. I don't think I can be mistaken. He must have arrived very recently."

"Mr. Elliott? How pleasant to meet him down here. Do you mean that gentleman walking in front, with an old lady leaning on his arm?"

"Yes; they must have passed us, but I don't think he has seen us." Her whip lightly touched the ponies as she added, "We will go home now, mamma; it is getting time for you to have your sleep."

Mrs. Arden passively acquiesced, merely glancing in the direction of the Elliotts as the carriage turned towards home.

They talked little during the rest of the drive. The sight of Lionel Elliott had abstracted Caroline's thoughts from the present. Recalling the encounter in the Exhibition, she found herself saying, with a touch of the old jealousy feeling, "I wish he had chosen some other place than this. I wonder is he married?"

CHAPTER LXIV.

"FROM NAPLES, GRANDFATHER."

THE fainting-fit which had so abruptly interrupted the scene between Mr. Fenwick and the man whom he had known as Godfrey Marlow, had been destined to terminate their interview, and prevent the explanation so eagerly desired by the merchant, who had

been overwhelmed with astonishment by the strange revelation which had given back to life one whom he had for years believed to be dead. He was obliged to be content without hearing further particulars. It was some time before the swoon yielded to the usual remedies. The landlady had to be called up, and when the patient did recover, he sank into a sleep from exhaustion.

Mr. Fenwick left, resolving to pay another visit on the following day. The intention had not been carried out, the next day found him confined to his bed with a sudden attack of gout that kept him a prisoner in the house for some weeks. On his recovery he went to the lodgings of Godfrey Marlow, or, as we must call him, Geoffrey Fenwick. There a surprise awaited him, for the eccentric lodger had gone, leaving no clue by which he could be traced. It seemed that after Mr. Fenwick's visit, the sick man had recovered rapidly, and as soon as he was able, had packed up his possessions and given up his rooms, the only pretext being that he was going abroad. This was all that Mr. Fenwick learned until some time afterwards, when he received a letter bearing the postmark of a town in Canada. It contained a few brief lines in the well-known handwriting :

"CHARLES.—At last I have fulfilled the errand that brought me back to England; satisfied myself that you had no design against my life. Further explanation might have led to a better understanding between us, but I will not say that we should have parted friends. The world has hardened me, and I am not quite ready for reconciliation. I expected you to pay me another visit without asking; as you did not, I made no effort for a second interview. It has pleased God to raise me up once more; and the first use I made of my recovery was to put the Atlantic between me and my native land. Whether I shall ever visit it again must remain matter for doubt.

"GEOFFREY FENWICK."

This was all. The letter contained no allusion to the assumed name or the motives which had led him to adopt his strange disguise. Mr. Fenwick was sorely disappointed, but there was no alternative but to remain content.

It was now the autumn of the second year, but nothing further had been heard of his cousin. Life had drifted on in the usual current, marked by few events to any of the inmates of that somewhat dull house in the fashionable London square. In her gentle unobtrusive way, Eva Ashton had so wound herself into the home circle of the Fenwicks that she had at last succeeded in winning a household niche of respect and love, even conquering much of Barbara's jealousy, and quietly living down many of her prejudices. Old David Ashton seemed to have taken a new hold of life. There was a touching interview between him and his nephew, Captain Kendrick, who, with the assistance of Mr. Fenwick, succeeded in obtaining an appointment as master of a vessel bound for Calcutta, and he had embarked on another voyage, with the resolution, if possible, of retrieving the past. He had sought and found John Hesketh,

and the two had parted mutually pleased with each other; but until his meeting with the old man the sailor had no idea of what John had taken upon himself with regard to the payment of the debt. John Hesketh was overwhelmed with confusion when he found that his secret was known; and when taxed with it by David Ashton on his visit to London, he put on his shy, awkward manner, and looked and spoke like a culprit. The real cause of his embarrassment was the presence of Eva.

"I said true, child," the old man commented to his granddaughter after their visitor had gone, "nobody but John Hesketh would have done it, and nobody but John would have passed it off in the way he did, just as though it was nothing but what people did every day. I understand now why thy father set such store on the lad: he had found out his worth—talk about Edward Arden, he is not fit to stand beside John."

The last words were added to himself; he would not distress Eva by comparisons, for, with his native shrewdness, he remarked that she was growing painfully sensitive on the subject, and seemed to avoid any questions about Edward; but he could do nothing, only watch her closely on the days that she received her letters. At such times his gaze followed her with wistful anxiety, for he had fancied once or twice that the perusal of a letter from Edward had left a shadow on her fair face. This had been going on some time, but at last there came a morning when the expected letter did not come; no comment was made of the omission, not even when the next day and the next witnessed a repetition of the disappointment, only her grandfather, with the fine intuition of affection, missed something from her voice and manner that made him fear things were going wrong. More than a fortnight passed, yet Edward had not written. His name had not been mentioned between them, but the old man knew that she was waiting and watching. The tardy letter came at last; she was sitting by his side reading when the servant brought it in. It was opened and read very quietly, only the simple explanation, "From Naples, grandfather."

It was refolded without further comment, and she turned again to the book she had been reading, but he noticed that her cheeks were a little paler, and her head drew up proudly. These were signs which he did not understand, but he shrank from questioning her, simply trusting that all was well. He would have doubted if he could have seen her, an hour afterwards, in her own room, when the letter was again taken out and read. It consisted merely of a few lines, evidently written in a hurry, as though it had been a task which the writer had been impatient to get through. It contained a lightly-coined apology for causing her disappointment, and ended with a hope that she was well and happy. No wonder that it was insufficient to satisfy the craving

of a heart which had been hungering for words of tenderness. She sat for some time with the open letter on her lap, musing over it, with a strange expression creeping like a cloud over her grey eyes, and a compressed look about her mouth, as though she was setting herself to find out something. Then she took some letters from a little box carefully locked

away in her drawer, and compared them line by line with the letter received that day. Why did she make that investigation, and for what? Was it to be another reading of the old story, which forms the sad epic of many a woman's life—shaken faith and a broken love-dream?

(To be continued.)

ROYAL AND FREE.

ENGLAND is a model country. The Head of the Kingdom is Royal, the people of the kingdom are Free. Here you have Liberty guided by Dignity, Dignity strengthened and glorified by Liberty.

Happy Briton! what more could you desire? Thank the God of nations for your glorious lot; sing the National Anthem; declare in bravura style that "Britons never shall be slaves;"—and then, compose yourself, and favour us with your best attention for about ten minutes.

First of all, then, don't fall into the delusion of supposing that it is our intention to enlarge, with many grandly-rounded Johnsonian periods, upon the greatness of our native land: there is no need to do that. There are swarms of admiring foreigners who applaud us to distraction. Let them have the monopoly thereof, and let us try to do something that will be of some use in the world. Our object is to enlist your sympathies with a certain institution which is Royal, inso-much as the Majesty of England is interested in its fortunes; and Free, in so far as its beneficent operations extend beyond the usual bounds of organised benevolence. In a word, we wish to mention just one or two things in connection with the Royal Free Hospital.

Please, however, to take notice that we shall simply deal with facts; leaving you to make out your own morals, and to form your own conclusions. If your conscience should preach to you, and you should happen to feel uneasy under its gentle probings, don't lay the blame to the article, but to the facts, which are, as the proverb saith, stubborn things. All we beg for is that you will look the stubborn things in the face, examine their real complexion, and try not to forget them.

Fact the First.—This is how the institution came to be founded:—"In the winter of 1827," says a History of the Royal Free Hospital, "a wretched female, under eighteen years of age, was

seen lying on the steps of St. Andrew's Church-yard, Holborn Hill, after midnight, actually perishing through disease and famine. She was a total stranger in London, without a friend, and died two days afterwards, unrecognised by any human being. This distressing event being witnessed by the late Mr. William Marsden, surgeon, who had repeatedly been struck with the difficulty arising to the Sick Poor from the system of requiring letters of recommendation before admission to the Public Hospitals, and of having only appointed days for admission, he at once determined to set about founding a Medical Charity in which destitution and disease should alone be the passport for obtaining free and instant relief. On this principle the 'Free Hospital' was established in Greville Street, Hatton Garden, and opened to the public on the twenty-eighth of February, eighteen twenty-eight."

Fact the Second.—In 1832 London was vexed with a grievous plague. The name of it was "Malignant Cholera." Hundreds and thousands were visited with this visitation; and you may be sure that the destitute poor bore their share of the epidemic. Here is one case out of seven hundred that year:—

WIFE.—"Oh, my poor husband! he's down with It, and what shall I do with him?"

NEIGHBOUR.—"I wish I could tell you!—Stay, send him to the Hospital!"

ALL THE HOSPITALS.—"Oh dear no! We should only be too glad; but it is impossible! The infection might kill all the other patients—besides, you have no letter of admission."

BUT ONE.—"My name is the Royal Free Hospital; and you may send him to ME."

In 1849 and 1854, again the same story.

Fact the Third.—Queen Victoria (who is at the head of nearly every worthy Charity in her kingdom) granted, shortly after her accession to the throne, the exceptional title of "Royal" to that which had been before known as "the Free;" besides which

her Majesty took an active interest in the well-being of the Hospital, whereof she is still a Patron.

Fact the Fourth.—“During each year”—we again refer to the History—“great numbers of the destitute sick, on their own application, are received into the wards of this hospital; and since its foundation in 1828, up to the 31st of December, 1869, upwards of one million, three hundred and twenty-eight thousand, two hundred and thirteen patients have obtained relief by its means.”

Fact the Fifth.—The patients are well cared for. A recent visit to the building in Gray’s Inn Road, London, has assured us of this. Not only have the poor sufferers everything they require medicinally, but pains are taken to make the place as pleasant as such a place can be to them. There are friends who send books for the patients to read, and so while away the tedious hours. There are bouquets of flowers, gathered by fair hands, for the patients to sniff at, and sigh pleasantly at, and altogether enjoy. The walls of the wards are not whitewashed blanks; for kind men like the Rev. J. B. Owen, of Chelsea (who is also chairman of the Weekly Board, and devotes much time to the spiritual wants of the sufferers), and Mr. Henry Graves, of Pall Mall, have presented the Hospital with pictures, most of them engravings which a connoisseur would be proud to accept. The attendants are kind and self-denying. They

rejoice in any improvement made in the condition or administration of the Hospital. As, for example—

VISITOR.—“And this is the Operating Room. An enormous sum-total would the pain make that has been endured here since the first case!”

MATRON (a thoroughly good woman, and so sensible).—“Ah, indeed! But there is no more agony of that kind now. Chloroform takes all pain away. We will set the present relief against the former suffering!”

This Operating Room is by no means the showiest part of the building, but it was a princely gift, coming as it did from a private gentleman.

Fact the Sixth.—The existence of this Charity solely depends on the voluntary contributions made towards its support.

Fact the Seventh.—This Charity stands in daily need of such support.

Fact the Eighth.—If every reader of this magazine were to set aside ONE SHILLING in aid of the Royal Free Hospital, and send it to the Treasurer, at the Hospital, Gray’s Inn Road, the total would represent a sum of TEN THOUSAND POUNDS sterling, equal to the average income of the institution for one year.

Fact the Ninth.—“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto ME.”

MOUNTAIN EVERLASTING.

 MILY and I have had a very pleasant walk, Mary. I do so wish you had been with us, for we found a beautiful little flower, which I am sure is very rare; at all events we never saw anything like it before.”

“Did you bring me a specimen, Charles?”

“Oh yes, and that was the most astonishing part of the matter. Emily gathered one of the little bunches of blossom to bring you; but on the way home we sat down on a stone to rest, and left it there. After a long time we remembered having done so, and Emily insisted on going back, although I was sure it would be quite withered by the heat of the sun; but when we arrived at the stone, there lay the flower looking as fresh as ever.”

“And here it is now,” said Emily, holding up a tiny bunch of rose-coloured blossom.

“No wonder you did not find it withered” replied Mary, after she had examined the flower, “for it is wild everlasting, and will keep as a fadeless bouquet,

Emily. It only flourishes in mountain districts, which accounts for your not having found it elsewhere. There are two varieties of this pretty little flower, rose-coloured and white; the latter is much more common than the former. Where did you find this?”

“Growing in a large patch on a dry hillock which we were running up, when our attention was attracted by the pretty blossoms under our feet, looking like fairy roses.”

“Did you observe the leaves of the plant?”

“Yes, they grow in clusters, close to the ground, and are of a pointed shape; but what struck me most was the silver edge round each.”

“What you call a silver edge, Charles, is merely the back of the leaf, which is of a very light green—indeed, almost white, and turns a little over the edge, thus forming a rim, which has the effect of a setting round each of the leaves.”

“Have you any story about mountain everlasting, Mary?”

"When I was a child, I used to gather large bunches of it, of both colours—for at that time we lived in a very mountainous country—and hang them up by the stalks to dry; then when sufficiently stiff, twine them amongst small evergreen leaves into winter bouquets and wreaths, with which I adorned my room. One day my mother found me employed in this manner, and told me a story—or rather a kind of floral allegory—which I have not yet forgotten."

"Oh! please, Mary, tell it to us."

"There was once a little girl, named Florina, whose Father dwelt in a beautiful palace, a long way off, so that it was necessary for her to take a tedious and wearisome journey in order to join him there. The country through which she must pass was composed of steep, frowning mountains and sterile plains, with here and there a picturesque valley, or a fertile field. Still there was no danger of going astray in the wilds, for a well-marked path led all along in the direction of her Father's house. This path, though easily distinguished, was quite as rough and toilsome—indeed, sometimes more so, than the surrounding country, on account of the numerous impediments which were often thrown across it from without, such as fallen trees and great stones, which it was hard to avoid stumbling over. Florina, however, managed to surmount all these obstacles bravely—indeed, her thoughts were so intently set on the anticipated delights of the home to which she was hastening that she took little heed of the perils and fatigues of the way. Her great desire was, to collect a large bunch of flowers to present to her kind Father on her arrival, for she had heard that such gifts were pleasing in his sight; not that they could in any way help to procure an entrance into the palace, that she had been promised already, and knew well that a place was being prepared for her reception; but she longed to bring some token of her loving remembrance of him, during their separation—some proof of gratitude for all his favours.

"At times Florina was tempted to overlook the small and ordinary flowers which grew at her feet, and to step a few paces out of the way, in order to reach others of a more rare or showy species; then the thought occurred to her mind, that it was impossible anything could be acceptable to her Father, procured by turning aside from the straight course in which it was his will she should walk; also, she feared, whilst roving about in search of strange flowers, having her attention drawn from the journey she had undertaken, and perhaps in the end losing her way home. Therefore for the future Florina confined her efforts to the enclosure in which she walked; and when she saw a pale, modest violet or primrose hiding amongst the leaves, and afraid to look up amid the stately flowers around, then she would gently raise its drooping head, and add it to the bouquet she was collecting for her Father. Or if she

observed the beautiful white bells of the wild convolvulus, climbing through the hedge, she would draw them forward, unheeding the briars and thorns with which they were intertwined, and strive to place them within the enclosure, then, if successful, would add their snowy blossoms with great joy to her bunch, which soon grew to a considerable size. Then the idea struck poor Florina that, after all, these were only fading earthly flowers, and would be quite withered away ere she could place them in her Father's hand; besides, of what value could anything prove to him which a little girl like her could gather? No doubt the gardens of his glorious home would contain much more beautiful flowers.

"How I wish I could find some worthy to present to my kind Father," she said; "some of the same nature as those of his own garden." But no, there were none to be found which were not liable to fade, like all other earthly things. "Strive as I may," exclaimed Florina with a heavy sigh, "I cannot procure anything worth offering; but perhaps if I ask my Father, he is so good that he will accept these poor fading flowers, because they were gathered in love to him, and will himself make them fit to adorn his beautiful abode."

"Then she spoke to her Father, as if he were present—which, indeed, he was, for he continually watched over the safety of his child, although she could not see him—and asked him to accept the few withering flowers she had gathered, and to make them fit for himself.

"After having spoken thus to her Father, she journeyed on more hopefully, not neglecting to swell the bouquet with every bud and blossom within reach. Fatigued and travel-worn, at length Florina neared her destination, and perceiving a gentle rise in the ground, she climbed to the top of the eminence, and there enjoyed a clearer view of her future home than had ever previously been her lot. The hill was covered with fadeless flowers of every bright and varied hue; and while she was gazing in wonder and delight at her Father's glorious abode, she did not perceive the hand which removed her own faded bunch of flowers, and placed in their stead the same number of everlasting blossoms. 'Surely,' thought Florina, 'my Father has accepted the frail and perishable earthly flowers, and has himself exchanged them for immortal and fadeless blossoms from the everlasting hills. I shall not now be ashamed to present them at the gate, for they are his own, and must be pleasing in his sight.'

"From this time Florina felt perfectly happy, and only longed for the arrival of the fast-approaching moment when she should see her Father face to face, and receive a welcome to his glorious mansion, of which she had enjoyed so clear a view from the everlasting hills. Thus she went on her way rejoicing; and the journey proved shorter than seemed likely; for a sudden turning in the path led at once to her

Father's gate, which flew open to receive the weary little girl. Immediately she was conducted to her Father's presence, and there with trembling joy laid her floral offerings at his feet. They found a ready and gracious acceptance, and loud were the acclamations of welcome and joy, which greeted her entrance.

"Already had her travel-stained and torn garments been removed, and she had been presented with a robe of white, pure and spotless, in which she now stood arrayed; and on her brow was placed a wreath, formed of the flowers she had gathered by the way, changed and immortalised, and now turned into fadeless crown. The joys and pleasures of Florina's glorious home I cannot attempt to describe, but the one transcendent delight was the presence of her Father, with whom she was to dwell for ever in fulness of joy.

"And now, children, this is the end of the story which the mountain everlasting brings to my recitation. Do you understand it?"

"I think I do," replied Charles.

"I know what it is about," said Emily; "but I don't quite understand the meaning of every part. I know the journey Florina took was through this world to heaven; but what were the flowers which she gathered on the road?"

"The various ways by which she proved her love to God, in passing along on her heavenward course—every little act of kindness and helpfulness which she performed for his sake towards his people. Also every word spoken, as well by example as precept, to those who were without, in order to draw them into the right path."

"And why might she not go elsewhere to seek flowers?"

"Because when we strive to attract those who are not going the heavenward road, by joining in their pursuits and amusements, we are invariably drawn away ourselves from the straight course, and fail to bring them in, through the very inconsistency of our conduct."

"I understand," said Emily. "And what were the everlasting hills, where Florina's flowers were changed from fading, to fadeless?"

"The place toward the end of the journey, where

a clearer faith was given her to realise the glories of heaven, and to see that her heavenly Father would himself supply her with righteousness not her own, in place of the poor and ineffectual attempts she had made; which the more she contemplated, the more worthless they appeared, just as the flowers faded away each hour and became less beautiful in their decay. Yet they were accepted, because God is pleased with the most trifling service performed from love to him, and each becomes an everlasting gem in the 'crown of glory which fadeth not away.'

S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

126. Two riddles are mentioned in the Bible. Where?

127. The Prophet Jonah makes up in a threefold manner for the want of any Messianic prophecy in his writings.

128. Quote a passage from one of the minor prophets which predicts that Christ should be smitten with a rod.

129. In Isa. ii. 4 we read of "nations beating their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks." In which of the minor prophets do we find a passage the very reverse of this?

130. Our Lord and his disciples were frequently accused by the Jews of breaking the Sabbath. Mention an occasion on which his disciples actually did observe the ordinance of the Sabbath.

131. By whom was the latest testimony borne to our Lord's divinity previous to his burial?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 384.

110. Judges xiii. 18. "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" The marginal reading for "secret" is wonderful.

111. That of the vineyard let out to husbandmen (Luke xx. 19).

112. "He was reckoned among the transgressors" (Luke xxii. 37).

113. Luke x. 13, where our Lord refers to the mighty works done in Chorazin, of which there is no account in the Gospels.

"THE QUIVER" LIFEBOATS.

WE have to record the wreck of a Sunderland brig on the Margate Sands on the 25th of January, and the gallant rescue of all hands by the crew of the *Quiver* Lifeboat. A strong easterly wind and a heavy snowstorm ushered in the morning. At about ten o'clock a vessel was seen from the sailors' look-out house to be near the sands, but it was supposed to be at anchor. The snow about this time fell thicker and faster than at any other part of the day, and the vessel was not seen again till about half-past twelve o'clock, when, as she was in the same position as when seen previously, it was supposed by our boatmen that she must be ashore. The lugger *Ocean* then put to sea, and was immediately followed by the *Quiver* Lifeboat. The latter succeeded in reaching the vessel, which was found to be the brig *Sarah* (Captain Jones), of Sunderland, from which place she was bound to Southampton with a cargo of coals, having six hands on board, all told. She sank on the sands, having got ashore at about half-past three in the morning. After the most praiseworthy and heroic conduct on the part of the crew of the Lifeboat, all hands were saved.